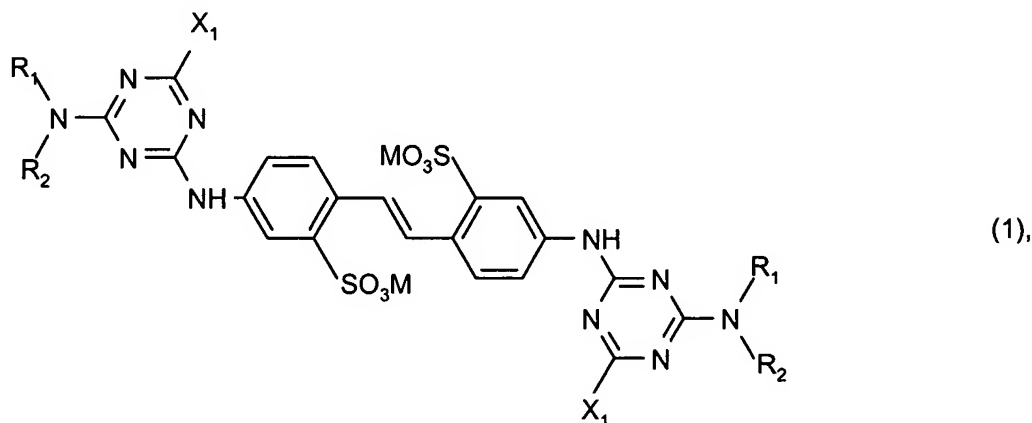


1. (original): A whitening pigment comprising the reaction product of
 (a) a melamine-formaldehyde and/or a melamine-urea polycondensation product and
 (b) a water-soluble fluorescent whitening agent of the formula



wherein each of the two

R_1 groups, independent of the other, represents a C_1 - C_6 alkyl or C_1 - C_4 alkyl-O- C_1 - C_4 alkyl residue, which is substituted by one or two $-CONH_2$, $-CONHC_1$ - C_4 alkyl, $-COOH$, $-SO_2NH_2$, $-SO_2NHC_1$ - C_4 alkyl or $-NH_2$ groups, each of the two

R_2 groups, independent of the other, represents hydrogen, C_1 - C_4 alkyl, C_2 - C_4 hydroxyalkyl or C_1 - C_4 alkoxy C_1 - C_4 alkyl, or

R_1 and R_2 together with the nitrogen atom complete a piperazine ring, each of the two

X_1 groups, independently, represent $-OH$, $-OC_1$ - C_4 alkyl, $-O$ aryl or the group $-NR_3R_4$, wherein R_3 and R_4 each, independently, represent hydrogen, C_1 - C_4 alkyl, C_2 - C_4 hydroxyalkyl, C_1 - C_4 alkoxy C_1 - C_4 alkyl, a phenyl, phenyl mono- or disulphonic acid residue or, R_3 and R_4 , together with the nitrogen atom to which they are attached, complete a morpholino, piperidino or pyrrolidino ring or, alternatively,

X_1 represents an amino acid residue from which a hydrogen atom has been abstracted from the amino group and

M is hydrogen, an alkaline or alkaline earth metal ion, ammonium, mono- di-, tri- or tetra-substituted C_1 - C_4 alkylammonium or C_2 - C_4 hydroxyalkylammonium or mixtures thereof.

2. (original): A whitening pigment according to claim 1, wherein the component
 (a) is a melamine-formaldehyde polycondensation product.

3. (currently amended): A whitening pigment according to ~~claims~~ claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein, in the compound of formula (1), each of the two R₁ groups, each of the two R₂ groups and each of the two X₁ groups are the same.

4. (currently amended): A whitening pigment according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, wherein, in the compound of formula (1),

R₁ represents a C₁-C₄alkyl residue, which is substituted by one -CONH₂ or -CONHC₁-C₄alkyl group.

5. (currently amended): A whitening pigment according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 4~~ claim 1, wherein, in the compound of formula (1),

R₂ represents hydrogen, C₁-C₄alkyl or C₂-C₄hydroxyalkyl.

6. (currently amended): A whitening pigment according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 5~~ claim 1, wherein, in the compound of formula (1),

X₁ represents the group -NR₃R₄, wherein

R₃ represents hydrogen, C₁-C₄alkyl, C₂-C₄hydroxyalkyl, C₁-C₄alkoxyC₁-C₄alkyl, a phenyl, phenyl mono- or disulphonic acid residue,

R₄ represents hydrogen C₁-C₄alkyl or C₂-C₄hydroxyalkyl or,

R₃ and R₄, together with the nitrogen atom to which they are attached, complete a morpholino ring or, alternatively,

X₁ represents an amino acid residue from which a nitrogen atom has been abstracted from the amino group.

7. (currently amended): A whitening pigment according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, wherein, in the compound of formula (1),

M represents hydrogen, sodium or potassium.

8. (currently amended): A process for the preparation of whitening pigment according to claim 1, whereby ~~the~~ a melamine-formaldehyde or melamine-urea polycondensation product is reacted with a fluorescent whitening agent of formula (1) in aqueous medium, in the presence of mineral acid, and subsequently treated with base.

9. (currently amended): ~~Use of the whitening pigment composition, according to any one of claims 1 to 7,~~ A method for the fluorescent whitening of paper which comprises applying to paper an effective whitening amount of a whitening pigment according to claim 1.

10. (original): A paper coating composition comprising, in addition to 0.01 to 10 parts by weight of the whitening pigment according to claim 1, per 100 parts of inorganic pigment,

- (i) from 3 to 25 parts by weight of binder and co-binder,
- (ii) 0 to 1 part by weight of rheology modifier and
- (iii) 0 to 2 parts by weight of wet-strength agent.

11. (currently amended): ~~Use of the coating composition according to claim 10,~~ A method for the fluorescent whitening of paper which comprises applying to paper an effective whitening amount of a paper coating composition according to claim 10.

12. (currently amended): Paper which has been treated with a whitening pigment composition according to claim 1 ~~or a coating composition, according to claim 10.~~

13. (new): Paper which has been treated with a coating composition according to claim 10.